

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 FAA-00 IO-10

ACDA-05 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 /084 W
----- 051168

P R 131113Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION ICAO

USDOCOSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6126

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU

SUBJECT: FURTHER GREEK VIEWS ON SECOND ROUND OF AEGEAN
AIR SPACE (FIR) TALKS

REF: ATHENS 5669

1. MFA'S DIRGEN FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS JOHN TZOUNIS IN
CONVERSATION AUGUST 12 PROVIDED DCM WITH GREEK GOVERN-
MENT'S FURTHER VIEWS ON RESULTS OF SECOND ROUND OF
FIR TALKS WITH TURKEY WHICH WERE CONCLUDED IN ATHENS
JULY 24 (REFTEL).

2. WHILE TZOUNIS AGREED THAT SECOND ROUND HAD BEEN MORE
PRODUCTIVE THAN FIRST ROUND HELD IN ANKARA IN JUNE, HE
EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT TURKS HAD BEEN UNWILLING
TO SEPARATE QUESTION OF CIVIL FLIGHTS, ON WHICH FULL
AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED, FROM THAT OF MILITARY FLIGHTS,
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WHERE THERE WERE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS STILL TO BE RESOLVED.

TZOUNIS SAID THAT ON THE BASIS OF AGREEMENTS REACHED IN ROUND II TROUBLESOME TURKISH AND GREEK NOTAMS COULD BE CANCELLED "TOMORROW", THEREBY OPENING UP AIR CORRIDORS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY WHICH HAVE BEEN CLOSED SINCE LAST JULY. TURKS HOWEVER WERE UNWILLING TO CANCEL THEIR NOTAM 714 UNTIL FULL AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON MILITARY FLIGHTS. SINCE GREEKS VIEWED AS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE ANKARA'S DEMAND FOR "TURKISH EARLY IDENTIFICATION ZONE" EXTENDING 50 MILES INTO AEGEAN FROM TURKISH MAINLAND, A DEADLOCK STILL EXISTED.

3. ACCORDING TO TZOUNIS, GREEKS HAD COUNTERED TURKISH CALL FOR 50-MILE ZONE BY INSISTING THAT SUCH A ZONE, IF CREATED, SHOULD BE RECIPROCAL, I.E., THAT TURKISH AIRCRAFT SHOULD NOTIFY GREEK AIR CONTROL CENTER OF TURKISH INLAND FLIGHTS WITHIN 50 MILES OF TURKISH COASTLINE. THIS, ANKARA HAD REFUSED TO CONSIDER. TZOUNIS ADDED THAT GREEKS HAD ALSO OFFERED, ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS, TO SUPPLY FLIGHT INFORMATION ON REQUEST TO TURKISH AIR CONTROL CENTER IF TURKS OBSERVED FOUR OR MORE RADAR TRACKS APPEARING SIMULTANEOUSLY OF AIRCRAFT MOVING TOWARD TURKISH COASTLINE AT MORE THAN 300 MILES PER HOUR. GOG BELIEVED THAT ARRANGEMENT OF THIS KIND OUGHT TO ALLAY WHATEVER TURKISH CONCERNS EXISTED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A SNEAK ATTACK BY GREEK AIRCRAFT ON TURKEY. TZOUNIS SAID HOWEVER THAT ANKARA WAS NOT INTERESTED IN THIS PROPOSAL EITHER.

4. IN FACT, SAID TZOUNIS, GOG DID NOT REPEAT NOT BELIEVE THAT ANKARA'S DESIRE TO ESTABLISH 50-MILE ZONE WAS MOTIVATED BY MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS. TZOUNIS FOUND IT HAD BE BELIEVE THAT TURKS WERE GENUINELY WORRIED THAT GREECE WOULD CONTEMPLATE ATTACKING TURKEY. EVEN IF SUCH CONCERNS EXISTED, HE ARGUED, A 50-MILE ZONE WOULD NOT PREVENT SNEAK ATTACK SINCE GREEK AIRCRAFT COULD ELUDE TURKISH RADAR BY APPROACHING ANATOLIAN MAINLAND AT LOW ALTITUDE. THIS BEING THE CASE, GREEKS BELIEVED THAT TURKISH MOTIVATION WAS ESSENTIALLY LEGAL AND POLITICAL. 50-MILE ZONE INTO AEGEAN WOULD COINCIDE WITH LIMITS OF SHELF AS DEFINED BY ANKARA. GREECE HAS NO INTENTION OF AGREEING TO ANY "SPECIAL STATUS" FOR THE AEGEAN WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE

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INTERNATIONAL COURT'S FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF GREEK AND TURKISH LEGAL CLAIMS WITH RESPECT TO AEGEAN. IN THE OPINION OF THE GREEKS, ANKARA'S INTEREST IN CREATING A 50-MILE ZONE WAS MOTIVATED BY TURKISH DESIRES TO AFFECT EVENTUAL DELIBERATIONS IN THE HAGUE RATHER THAN BY GENUINE CONCERN FOR TURKISH MILITARY SECURITY.

5. IN RESPONSE TO DCM'S QUESTION, TZOUNIS SAID THAT

GREEK AND TURKISH DELEGATIONS WERE STILL SCHEDULED TO MEET SOME TIME IN SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS THEIR JOINT SUBMISSION OF AEGEAN PROBLEMS TO THE HAGUE COURT. THE THIRD ROUND OF FIR TALKS WAS ALSO SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN SEPTEMBER. THE TWO SETS OF TALKS WERE NOT REPEATED NOT CONNECTED IN THE GREEK MIND AND FOR THE REASONS TZOUNIS HAD OUTLINED, ATHENS WAS DETERMINED TO KEEP THEM SEPARATE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRSPACE, AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, AEGEAN, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ATHENS06126
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750279-0795
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750854/aaaabviy.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ATHENS 5669
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <30 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FURTHER GREEK VIEWS ON SECOND ROUND OF AEGEAN AIR SPACE (FIR) TALKS
TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, GR, TU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006